

Fireweed

Epilobium angustifolium



Fireweed is known as a pioneer plant - one that can come in very quickly after a disturbance such as fire, hence the common name of this plant. Each of its seeds has a tuft of cottony fibers which allows it to be widely dispersed by the wind. This colonizing ability also makes it quite prominent along roadsides and trails. It often forms large, colorful patches since it can spread by underground stems as well as by seeds. Fireweed is widely distributed throughout the west from montane to timberline habitats and extends north into Alaska where it comes in as glaciers recede.

Like all members of the Evening Primrose family, fireweed's flower parts come in fours. Bees are one of the main pollinators of fireweed and they produce an especially